HINTS *for the* BUSY HOUSEWIFE

HEALTH AND CLEANLINESS COUNCIL
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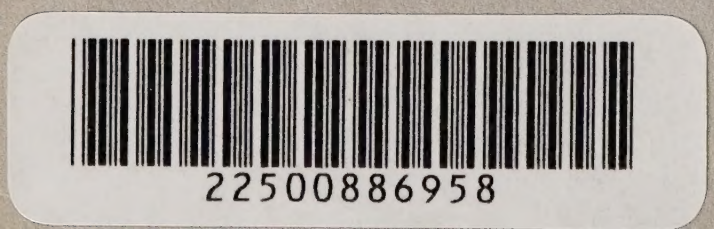


HINTS FOR THE BUSY HOUSEWIFE

SECOND EDITION, 1927

ISSUED BY

THE HEALTH & CLEANLINESS COUNCIL

5, TAVISTOCK SQUARE

LONDON, W. 1

PRICE THREEPENCE

FOREWORD

WOMEN take a pride—and a very proper pride—in keeping themselves and their households clean.

They "turn out" their rooms at regular intervals, and "spring-clean" once a year. They wash their hands and faces, and make the children wash theirs, two or three times a day, and there is the weekly Saturday night bath for everybody.

Is this enough? Every doctor, every health expert, says "No!"

The human body gives off, through its skin, a quantity of perspiration every day. This is often so fine that you cannot see it on the skin. At other times it stands as heavy sweat in drops on the surface. This perspiration must be washed away or the pores of the skin will be clogged and the general health affected. Just as the fire does not burn properly if you leave the cinders in the grate, so the body does not work healthily if you leave the perspiration on the skin. To keep fit, therefore, you need a warm bath or a rub down every day.

The hands and the clothes are constantly coming in contact with dirty, dusty, *germ-laden* objects. Where there's dirt there's danger.

However well you may clean your home, people *will* walk in and out, bringing dirt and impurities from the streets; dust and dirt *will* blow in and settle in the curtains, on the floor, in the corners of the room; in fact, anywhere they can get a foothold.

Where there's dirt there's danger. Cleanliness is the first law of health.

The Health and Cleanliness Council is greatly indebted to Miss L. M. Mojer, Matron of the Nursery Training School, Wellgarth Road, London, N.W. 11, and to Miss M. E. Marsden, Head of the Domestic Science Training College, Battersea Polytechnic, London, S.W. 11, for their courtesy in allowing photographs to be taken in illustration of this handbook.

HINTS FOR THE BUSY HOUSEWIFE

SECTION I

THE IMPORTANCE OF CLEANSING THE WHOLE SKIN

A PIECE of furniture, china, or a garment, if washed and put away, will keep clean as long as it is covered up. But the human body, however well washed it may be one day, and however clean may be its covering, is ready to be washed again the next day. This is because the skin of the living man, woman, or child is constantly giving off a greasy moisture. The process goes on all the time, even when we are lying quietly in bed. Usually the moisture is very fine: you cannot see it or feel it. But at times, when you are very hot or very much excited, the perspiration shows in large drops. From each little pore the perspiration oozes, carrying with it some of the poisonous matters which have formed in the blood. The pores, in fact, are the gateway to health. You must keep that gateway open.

BLOCKED-UP PORES CAUSE CHILLS AND COLDS

Few people realize the real importance of keeping the skin clean. The dirt in blocked-up pores can be re-absorbed into the system, poison-

ing it; a scratch, a cut, or a little chafing may lead to blood-poisoning solely from the condition of the skin. Then there is the danger from disease germs, which, though we cannot see them, may be flourishing in the air, settling upon everything we touch. A well-fed, well-washed, and healthy body is usually able to resist these germs. Chills and colds are more easily caught by people whose skins are not perfectly clean, because some of the gateways to health—the pores—have not been kept open.

In houses with bathrooms and a constant supply of hot water it is a very easy matter for each member of the family, if desired, to have a bath each day. Even with a large family, all that has to be done is to arrange as amicably as possible the order in which each is to use the bathroom.

WHAT THE DOCTORS SAY

In homes where there is no bathroom or where, for financial reasons, it is only possible to heat the water in the bathroom once a week, how is it possible for all the members of the family to keep their skins clean and healthy? Must the skin of the body go unwashed for six days at a time? Doctors and specialists warn us that we cannot keep thoroughly fit and healthy unless we wash all over frequently. Warm water and soap are necessary to remove the dirt from the skin. This dirt is made up of particles of dust from the air, dead flakes of the skin, dried perspiration, particles of the clothing—all mixed

together with oil from the skin. No wonder soap and water are needed—needed daily! What is the best to be done if one cannot have a bath daily?

THE "INSTALMENT" PRINCIPLE

A person living alone can easily take a daily bath on what a noted sanitarian called the "instalment" plan described below. Where more than one person is sharing a room, if no screen is available, a towel-horse, or the backs of two chairs with towels or a dust-sheet thrown over them, will ensure the necessary privacy. The equipment consists of a kettleful of hot water, a wash-hand basin, a foot-bath (or enamelled bowl or small wash-tub), a flannel, soap, and rough towel. Place the foot-bath on the floor in front of the wash-stand, pour half the hot water into the basin and the rest into the foot-bath, adding sufficient cold to make the water comfortably warm. After undressing, stand in the foot-bath or bowl and, from the wash-hand basin, soap the hands, face, neck, arms, armpits, and chest and back to the waist. Rinse out the flannel and go over the parts again to wash off the lather; rinse the flannel a second time, wringing it out well, and take off any soap remaining.

THE GLOW OF HEALTH

Dry thoroughly. The arms and trunk must be rubbed really *hard*, the back being dried by taking an end of the towel in each hand and drawing it backwards and forwards across the

back. This vigorous rubbing brings a glow to the skin which in itself is health-giving.

If an undervest is worn, this could now be put on. The body is next washed carefully and thoroughly from the waist downwards to the knees. The same process of rubbing, rinsing, and drying is followed, the rubbing down being very vigorous. The feet, having been longer in water, are quickly soaped and cleansed. Dry them well, particularly between the toes. By the time the clothes are put on, the body should be in a glow all over.

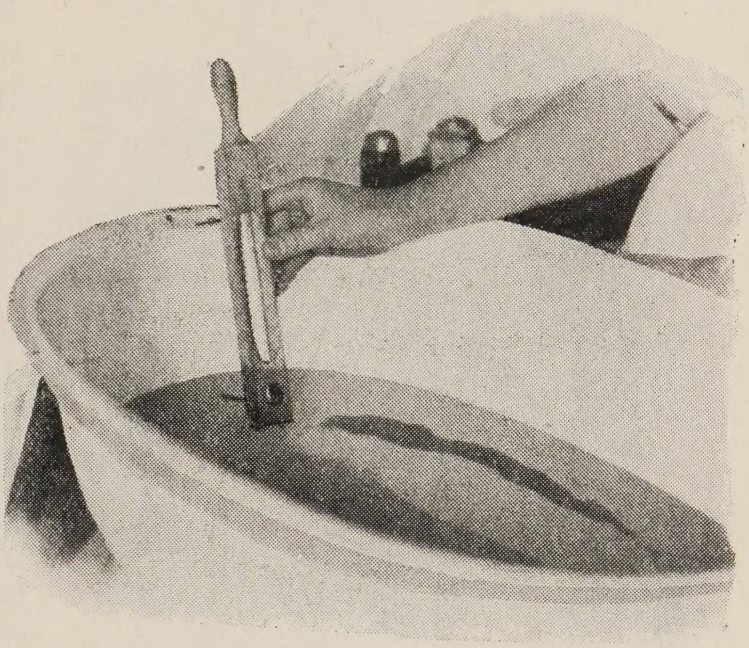
QUICKLY DONE

It is surprising how short a time this type of "bath" takes. People agile and quick in their movements can get through the whole process in less than five minutes. In the case of children who love to dawdle and play with soap and water, an elder should be at hand to hasten matters, otherwise the youngsters are apt to prolong the business and get chilled.

BATHING BABY

THE Baby's daily bath must never be omitted. It is impossible to keep him in good health unless the skin is kept perfectly clean. Young mothers may be a little nervous just at first, but they soon find that their babies are not difficult to handle, and that if they are sure and quiet in their movements the baths become a pleasure to themselves as well as to the children.

Everything should be put ready before starting: Bath on stool or chair by fire, a chair for mother (the right side is the best for this so that baby's feet will be towards the fire), and another chair or table for the small things that are needed—sponge, soap, small clean bowl with boiled water and cotton-wool swabs to wash the face, safety pins, powder, vaseline, bath thermometer—hot and cold water within easy reach, a complete set of clean clothes on the guard in case of need, and the dry towels.



The correct way to test the temperature of baby's bath.
(*Photograph taken at the Nursery Training School, Wellgarth Road, London, N.W.* 11.)

The room must be warm, the door closed, and a screen placed round the mother's chair to protect from draught. A large clothes-horse covered with a blanket or a tablecloth would serve as a screen.

Having nearly filled the bath with water, a little warmer than needed (100° F.), the mother should wash her own hands and take the baby on her knee. The heat of the water should be tested with a thermometer. This can be obtained quite cheaply from the chemist. If the mother cannot get a thermometer, she should test the heat of

the water with her elbow. After baby's gown has been removed, his face is washed, starting gently with the eyelids, and being careful not to touch the delicate mucous membrane of the eyes. Pieces of clean, boiled rag, or preferably swabs of cotton-wool from the bowl of cool boiled water, should be used for this purpose, each swab being discarded after use. The nostrils may be gently cleaned with tiny rolls of wool. The inside of the mouth should not be touched as long as it is healthy, for it has been found that vigorous cleansing of the mouth may damage the lining of it and lead to infection.

If you have not got a thermometer, take the temperature this way.
(*Photograph taken at the Nursery Training School, Wellgarth Road, London, N.W.* 11.)

Baby is then entirely undressed and wrapped in the warm towel, all except his head. The scalp is gently but firmly rubbed with a good lather of soap on the hands, held over the bath to have the soap thoroughly rinsed off, and dried with a

soft towel. The temperature of the bath should again be tested with the thermometer—or if no thermometer is available, with the mother's elbow—and more hot or cold water added as needed. The mother's hands are again lathered and the child's entire body—ears, neck, armpits, groins, and back—carefully and quickly washed.

Wash baby's head first.
(Photograph taken at the Nursery Training School, Wellgarth Road, London, N W. 11.)

The child is lifted into the bath with one hand under his shoulder and grasping the left arm, and the other hand under the buttocks. After a good rinsing, he is replaced on the dry part of the towel and covered up while each separate part and crease is gently dabbed with the soft towel.

Very little powder, if any, is needed, and that only in the creases. The baby is placed on his

face and the clean clothes laid one over the other before he is turned and the dressing completed.

No part of the towel must be allowed to touch the floor, nor must the little vest be placed on the fender—where it might pick up germs—to be warmed. The clothing that is taken off should be hung on the chair back or placed in a clean bowl, *not* dropped on the floor.

When the child is old enough he will sit up in his bath and on his mother's knee, but the washing process is much the same. After the sixth month the hair should be washed twice a week only. A good super-fatted soap should be used, and a pure powder. The mother should always wash her hands after touching a dirty napkin, and before touching baby's face, or his feeding utensils.

Napkins must be changed when wet or soiled. They should be washed with good soap, and no soda, rinsed in several waters and boiled, then wrung tightly and hung out to dry.

THE TODDLER'S TOILET

CLEANLINESS of body and of clothing is quite as important for the toddler as for the young baby. In some ways the toddler is exposed to more dangers, and he certainly has a great capacity for collecting dirt. Superficial dirt is not necessarily serious, but it is essential that all children should be really clean at least twice a day, and that they should come to every meal with clean hands and faces.

The toddler should have a warm—not hot—

bath every night at bedtime. A cool bath (about 80° F.) in the morning also is excellent, or, if this cannot be managed, the evening bath should be finished by pouring a jugful of cool water over the child's back before taking him out, and by giving him a vigorous rubbing with a roughish towel.

There should be an entirely different set of

Mother knows that where there's dirt there's danger.
(*Photograph taken at the Nursery Training School, Wellgarth Road, London, N.W.* 11.)

clothes for the night, and the day clothes should be changed and washed as often as possible, even daily, if it can be managed. The garment next the skin as well as the outermost garment should be clean daily.

SCHOOL-CHILDREN

With school-children a daily bath may sometimes be an impossible ideal. In that case they

should be washed *all over* before going to bed. A stand-up wash in a basin or small bath—that is, on the "instalment plan"—can generally be managed. Once a week, at least, there should be a good warm plunge-bath, and the hair should be thoroughly washed.

The hair of school-children should be washed every week.
(*Photograph taken at the Nursery Training School, Wellgarth Road, London, N.W.* 11.)

Cleanliness is greatly a matter of habit, and when a child has been trained to enjoy being clean he will have formed a self-protective habit. Ears and nails always need special attention at this age. The external ear should be carefully cleaned every day, but a word of warning is necessary about the internal ear: that is best left alone. Any substance, such as towels, matches, or hairpins pushed down the ear to clean it may cause damage, the least of which is to push the dirt down on to the ear drum.

Each child should have his or her separate towel, soap, and sponge, and be encouraged to keep them in good order. Teeth should be cleaned before going to bed, and no sweets or other food should be taken after the cleaning.

The clothing of the English school-child is often sadly deficient in real cleanliness. The children of the French peasants have every garment—dress and knickers, as well as underclothing—washed every week; and our children would be altogether neater and more attractive, as well as less liable to infection, if their clothing were chosen with this end in view.

These ideals may sound faddy, and be thought to involve much work, but mothers will find that the result in health and comfort and self-respect is well worth the first effort, and the routine, once established, is not difficult.

TOILET HINTS FOR YOUNG AND OLD

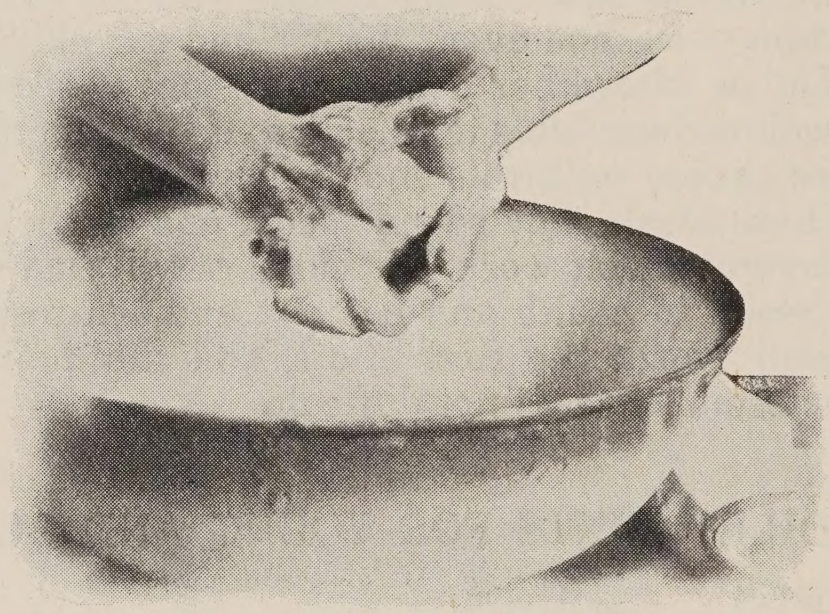
HANDS

YOU are in danger when your hands are dirty. Dirt is the lurking place of germs. You may infect everything you touch—food, clothes, your mouth and nose. The slightest prick or scratch may be an opening through which disease germs can enter and set up blood-poisoning or worse. Your safeguard is cleanliness.

When you are on a very dirty job cover the hands with a "dry" thick lather of soap, letting it get under the nails. When you wash them after the

job, the dirt will come away quickly and easily. People who work in gardens or stables must pay great attention to cleanliness, for the germ of lockjaw (as well as of other diseases) lurks in these places and can get into the body through any cut, scrape or scratch. Then lockjaw—that dread disease from which few recover—follows.

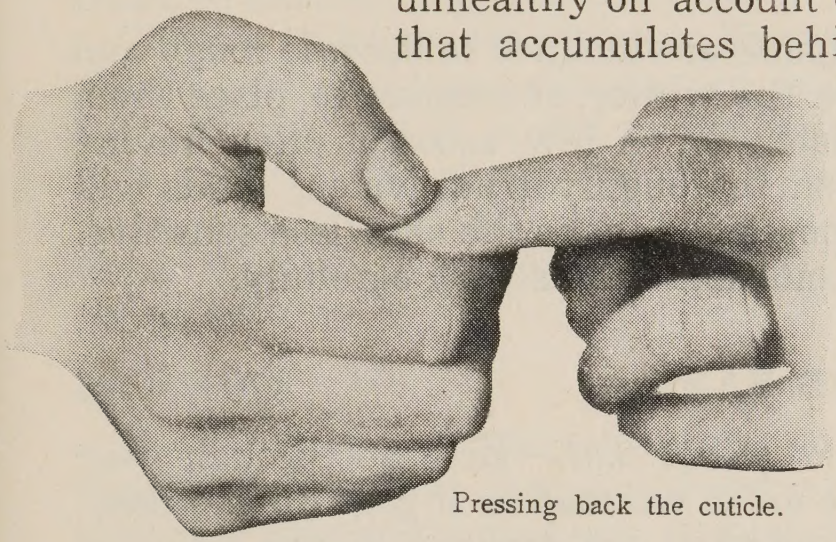
Never prepare food, set a table, or sit down



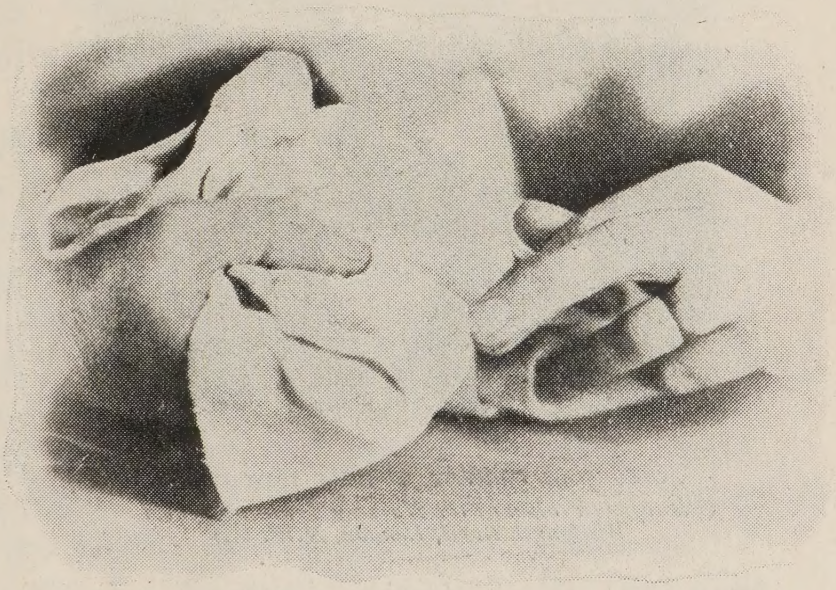
Before starting a dirty job

to a meal with dirty hands, for they will contaminate any food they touch, and they will greatly take from your natural and healthy enjoyment of what you eat. Many cases of typhoid fever and food poisoning have been traced to germs from bodily excretions being conveyed to food by the dirty hands of the cook. That is why it is most important to wash the hands after using the lavatory or w.c. Children should be taught this good rule as early as possible.

Apart from being unsightly, long nails are unhealthy on account of the dirt that accumulates behind them. If worn short nails are more easily kept clean and are not likely to catch in things and to break in an unsightly and painful way. Before attending to the nails, soak the hands thoroughly well in hot water and soap and use a soapy nailbrush vigorously. Then file or cut the nails to the shape of the finger. Push back the skin round the nails with a soft towel or with the finger every time you wash your hands. This



Pressing back the cuticle.



More effective than a nail-brush. Cleaning under the nail with thin towel or cloth held under a nail of other hand.

will prevent hang-nails, which are sore and ugly.

If your hands are inclined to become rough and chapped in the winter, remember to place them in cold water for a few seconds after having washed them thoroughly in hot water. This will close the pores and make the skin less sensitive. Dry the hands and wrists very carefully.

NOSE AND EARS

Keep your mouth shut.—Breathe through your nose. The air is warmed as it goes up the nose. Dust and microbes are trapped in the lining of the nose and do not reach the lungs and throat. Blowing the nose cleans it. Many people have throat and chest troubles because they breathe through the mouth instead of through the nose. Teach your children to blow their noses thoroughly. Each child, even the baby, should have its own handkerchief—a clean one every day for preference. This certainly means a little

Teach your children to blow their noses.
(*Photograph taken at the Nursery Training School, Wellgarth Road, London, N.W.* 11.)

extra washing, but it's worth it to keep your children healthy and free from colds.

Children who are too young to blow their noses should have their nostrils cleaned daily. Dip a piece of soft rag in warm water, twist the end into a spiral, and gently clean out each nostril. This simple precaution will save the children much discomfort and probably much actual suffering later on in life.

DANGERS

If a child persistently breathes through the mouth, snores, has frequent head colds, or an obstinate cough and deafness, it generally means that there is an obstruction at the back of the nose. Get medical advice *at once* and attend carefully to the cleanliness of the nose. The child's whole health may be affected by a neglected " stuffy nose." But this trouble seldom occurs if a child is taught right from the beginning to breathe properly, to like fresh air, and to be thoroughly clean. Remember that the clean handkerchief, frequently used, prevents many nose troubles.

The Ears.—The first rule in the care of the ears is cleanliness. Grown-ups wash their ears as a matter of course, but young children, especially little boys, avoid them like the plague when washing the face. Have an " ear inspection " each morning. Remember, where there's dirt there's danger. Dirty ears are unhealthy as well as unsightly. Tiny children should have their ears cleaned out with a piece of soft rag which has been dipped in warm soapy water and twisted

into a spiral. They should be dried in a similar way with another piece of soft clean rag, particularly behind the ear. Many babies get sore places behind the ears because they are not carefully dried.

Never neglect earache. If it persists, take the child to a doctor. Never try to syringe the ears. You might easily injure the sensitive drums and cause permanent deafness.

CARE OF THE HAIR

Beautiful hair is a gift of nature, but care and attention are essential if its beauty is to be maintained; and no woman's "crowning glory" is unattractive if it is well cared for.

Cleanliness of the hair is as important as cleanliness of the body, but few people realize this fact. Every night the hair should be brushed thoroughly to remove the dust that has settled on it during the day, and to stimulate the scalp, thereby encouraging the growth of hair. After a few minutes' brisk brushing, the hair should be combed away from the head, not on to it. This allows air to get to the scalp and also encourages a natural wave, especially if the comb is slightly damp.

Frequent washing of the hair is most important, but the frequency should depend on the nature of the hair, for while the greasy kind needs washing every ten days or fortnight, natural dryness is apt to be encouraged by too frequent washing.

While some shampoo powders may be good, others are not always beneficial. A good curd

soap makes an excellent lather, and is cheap and thoroughly cleansing without being in any way injurious.

How to Shampoo.—Cut up shreds of soap into a jug, cover with hot water and stir vigorously. When the soap is dissolved, add cold water to reduce the mixture to a comfortable temperature. Pour the lather on to the head and rub the scalp thoroughly with the finger-tips. Rinse thoroughly in three or four lots of clear water. A small teaspoonful of lemon-juice or vinegar may be added with advantage to the last water.

The hair should be dried with warm towels or in the open air—not in front of the fire.

Brushes and combs should be kept scrupulously clean; and, when washing these, do not forget to clean your slides and hairpins too.

HOW TO CLEAN HAIR-BRUSHES

Make a good hot soapy lather, or dissolve a piece of soda the size of a walnut, or put a few drops of ammonia in boiling water. Dip the brushes, bristles downwards, into the water, keeping the backs and handles as free from water as possible. Move the bristles about in the water until they are clean.

Rinse in cold water, shake well. Wipe the handles and backs, but not the bristles. Set to dry in the sun or near a fire.

THE CHILDREN'S HAIR

The hair of school-children should be washed every week. They mix with other children so much that the only way to ensure freedom from

scalp troubles is absolute cleanliness. Pure soap and warm water are all that is needed. Trouble taken to train your daughters in the care of their hair will be well rewarded. If the girls have long hair it is best to keep it plaited during school hours. Each child should have her or his own comb and brush, if possible, and should learn to keep these clean.

WHEN THE UNPLEASANT HAPPENS

When your children go to school and mix with others not so well cared for as themselves, they run the risk of becoming infected with head lice. It is always a good thing, therefore, to examine their heads frequently, for much bother and anxiety will be saved if the trouble is detected in its early stages and dealt with promptly.

Nits are the eggs of vermin, and the trouble they cause is due to the fact that, if undisturbed, they hatch out and become vermin. The irritation which the child experiences often causes the child's health to suffer. There are, however, many ways in which nits and vermin can be removed. By following the instructions given on p. 21 very carefully, this removal can be carried out without producing sores or scabs upon the scalp; should these be present, the hair must be cut short and the scabs removed after softening with a poultice or olive oil. The head should then be lathered with soft soap, washed carefully in hot water, rinsed and dried thoroughly. A soothing ointment should then be applied to the sores, and the process repeated every night until the head is well.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR CLEANSING HEADS

(1) If there are many nits the hair should be cut quite short, and any nits remaining on the short hairs removed.

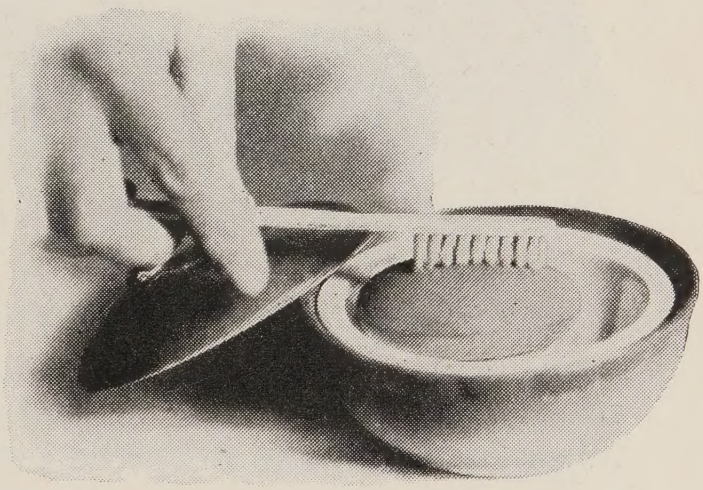
(2) If there are not many nits present, the hairs with nits upon them should be cut away, or the nits pulled from the hairs after thoroughly lathering and washing with soft soap and water.

(3) Nits can also be removed by using a steel nit-comb. To remove nits with this comb as speedily as possible, a strand should be taken, greased with olive oil and water, and the comb placed through the hair and pulled along the length of the hair away from the head.

When vermin are present, a small tooth-comb should be used night and morning for freeing the head.

TAKE CARE OF YOUR TEETH

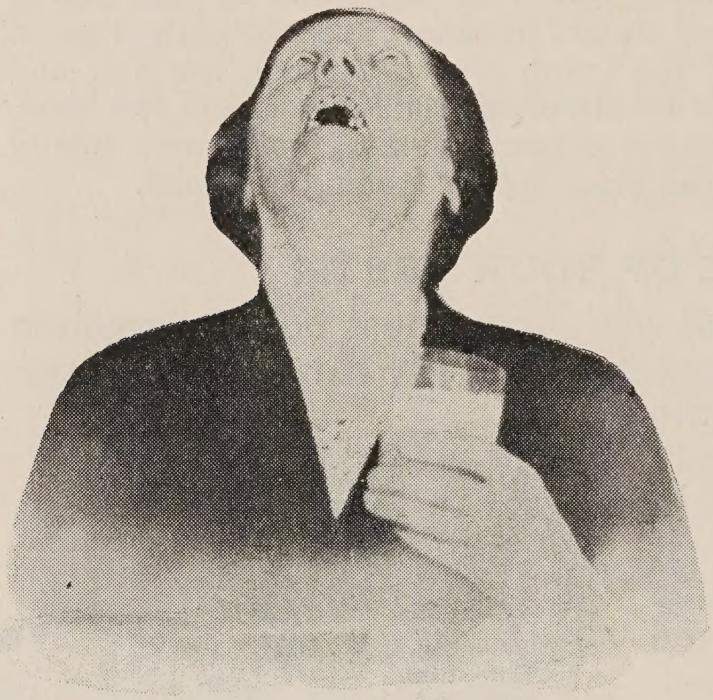
Teeth, mouth, and throat must not be forgotten in the daily practice of bodily cleanliness. Dangerous germs find a handy lodging-place in the mouth. If neglected they may poison the whole system. There is nothing more attractive than a bright smile, but you cannot smile with an easy mind if you know your teeth will not bear inspection. A good tooth-paste is, of course, of great benefit, but if you have no tooth-paste, *just rub your brush on the soap tablet.* Soap will cleanse and brighten the teeth excellently and



A good and cheap teeth cleaner.

benefit the gums too. An occasional salt-and-water gargle (½ a teaspoonful of salt to a tumbler of water) will help to keep the throat strong and germ-free.

Try to brush your teeth after every meal, but at least brush them every night and go to sleep with a clean, pure mouth, and make time to do them each morning. Tiny bits of food left in and between the teeth ferment and cause decay and unpleasant breath. If your teeth are decayed *they will poison the food* you eat, and sooner or later you will have pain and discomfort. Eating raw apples and other fruit helps to keep the teeth clean.



Cleanse and strengthen your throat by gargling with salt-and-water.

The moment you notice a trace of decay, have the tooth stopped by a dentist. It will cost a little, but you will save the tooth, and you will save yourself from the torture of toothache and from the expense of buying false teeth later on.

Crowded teeth decay most easily because food particles lodge about them most easily. A well-

arranged set of teeth has its foundation even before baby's birth. The expectant mother's teeth must therefore be in good order for the sake of her health and her child's. A decayed tooth offers a "way in" for germs of decomposition and disease, just as much as a wound on any other part of the body. Keep the armour of the body whole and clean and you will have good health.

Keep your feet healthy.

False teeth require as much attention as natural ones. Most dentists advise that they should be taken out of the mouth at night and put in water. If, however, you do not want to do this, cleanse them thoroughly with soap and warm water last thing at night, and cleanse the mouth and gums too. This, and frequent cleaning during the day, will keep your mouth sweet and healthy and the teeth a good colour.

FOOT RULES

It is quite impossible to keep a body healthy if the feet are neglected. To wash the body all over at least once a day is ideal, but sometimes inconvenient. To wash the feet is as easy as to

wash the hands, and just as necessary. The feet, being most of the time confined in stockings and then encased in leather, lack ventilation, and if they are not kept clean the results are very uncomfortable and unpleasant.

A warm, soapy foot-bath is the best thing you can give your feet, and, if your health is good, follow up with a cold-water rinse. This hardens the feet and makes them better able to resist summer's heat and winter's cold.

Preparing for strenuous exercise.

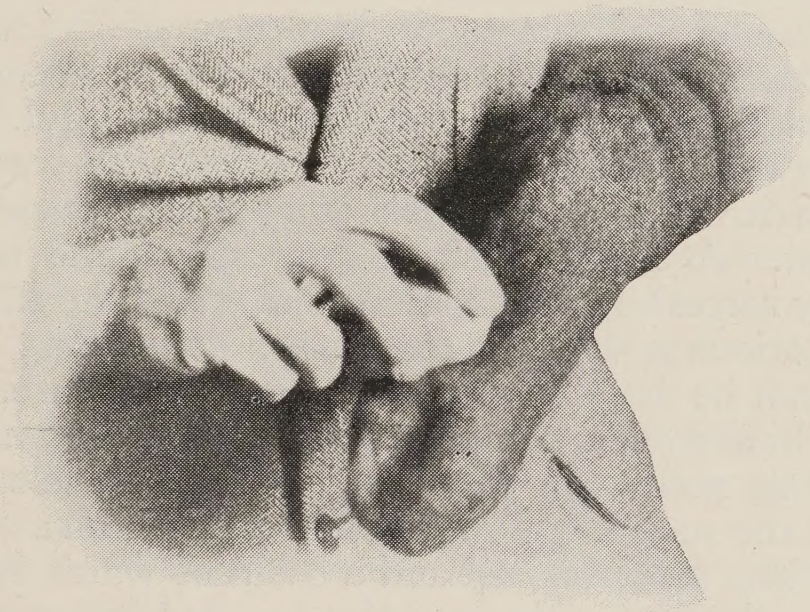
Keep the toe-nails cut, and cut them square. This will prevent those very painful things, ingrowing nails. It will also help to prevent holes in the stocking toe.

Change Your Stockings Constantly.—They must be washed well and often, in warm soapy water, if the feet are to be at ease. A hard, ridgy stocking or a lumpily darned one does as much harm as a tight shoe. If you wear ribbed stockings, let them have plain soles for comfort.

Rest tired feet by soaking them in hot soapy water. Change into fresh stockings. The oftener you can give them these, especially in hot weather, the greater your comfort will be

—the less chance, too, of corns and hardened skin.

Stockings which have been worn *for violent exercise* like tennis, hockey, running, or dancing, should not be worn twice. They grow quite hardened with the sweat which the normal foot gives off, and if they are not washed very frequently, they become both objectionable and harmful, as well as wearing into holes more quickly. Wash the feet—if not the body—at once after exercise, and put on fresh stockings if you wish to be fresh and cleanly.



Preparing for a long tramp.

A Hint.—Some long-distance walkers rub the feet well with wet soap and let it dry on. They find that this keeps the feet from blisters and the skin from becoming thick. Soaping the soles of the socks is also a good aid to pleasant tramping.

WASHING THE SICK

WASHING a sick person lying helpless in bed is an art that requires a good deal of practice before it can be done efficiently single-handed. It is therefore best learned by assisting a good nurse and by taking a proper course of instruction in the care of the sick. Often, however, the housewife has to meet an emergency, and may find these hints useful.

In hot weather a patient is more easily washed than in cold, as the risk of exposure is not so great. A warm wash is generally found to be very refreshing to a patient, but when the illness is serious a wash is sometimes exhausting, and cannot be done all at once. The hands, face, and teeth, however, should always be done on waking in the morning. The teeth should be cleaned and the mouth rinsed out after every meal.

Place soap, flannel and a basin of warm water near the bed. Remove the top bedclothes with the exception of one blanket, which is used to keep the patient covered. Remove the night-dress, hang it up to air or warm a clean one. Place towels round the patient so that no drop of water can possibly reach the bedclothes. First wash the face and neck and then dry, wash and dry each arm in turn, next the chest, then the abdomen and groins (under covering blanket), then each leg in turn. Turn patient on one side and wash from above downwards, taking one part at a time and drying off each before proceeding. Keep the patient covered as you wash.

When completed slip the nightdress over the head and arms.

The greatest danger to be feared for the skin of a patient is the appearance of bed-sores, which are caused by continual pressure, and increased by creases, crumbs, etc., in the bed. They come generally on the lower part of the back, the heels, shoulders, and sometimes elbows. After washing the patient, if there is any sign of redness, methylated spirit (to harden the skin) should be rubbed on these parts before powdering. If a sore is already formed, it must be dressed and care taken to avoid further pressure by applying pads of cotton-wool around, not over, a bony prominence, or by the use of an air-pillow. Frequent change of position, if possible, is wise.

The patient generally needs a little nourishment after being washed, as the process is apt to be somewhat tiring to the very sick.

It is very useful to the housewife to attend home nursing classes and learn how to tend and feed an invalid.

SECTION II—HOME LAUNDRY

WASHING AT HOME

FIGHT Dirt to Fight Disease.—The regular weekly washing of clothes is just as important as the daily washing of the body, for clothes are always picking up germs and impurities, which can, however, be removed by plenty of hot water and soap.

It is best to do the family wash at home if possible. Clothes washed at home last much longer, and it costs less to wash them at home. When you wash clothes yourself you know that they are as clean as soap and water can make them. This applies specially to underclothes which come next to the skin. Only careful cleansing can remove the impurities which they are bound to collect.

Orderly methods make the work easy.

CHOOSE A GOOD SOAP

All soaps, unfortunately, are not as mild and pure as they might be. An impure soap will make clothes terribly harsh, and shorten their life. The wisest plan is to try a soap, and use it always if you find it satisfactory.

WATER IS CHEAP

One secret of a successful wash is thorough rinsing. Two, three, or four lots of rinsing water is not too much by any means. Water is cheap enough, and the sweet cleanliness of the clothes more than repays you for the little extra trouble.

DRYING

If possible, dry your clothes in the open air and in the sun—it makes them so much sweeter and helps to keep them beautifully white. Fresh air and sunlight are the cheapest bleachers for the housewife. If the clothes are out even for half an hour it makes a big difference to them. That is another advantage of home washing.

SAVING WOOLLENS

Woollens are more quickly ruined than most other fabrics. Careless washing results in hard, shrunken garments. Woollens are expensive, too; you can't afford to risk having them spoiled. Washed with your own hands, properly dried and aired, they'll give you full wear, and keep their warmth-giving qualities right to the end (see p. 37 for the best way to wash woollens).

FOR BABY'S COMFORT

Not many women put their baby-clothes out to wash. Baby-things are washed so often that they could easily become a bad colour and harsh to the tender skin if any but interested hands handled them. But home washing means plenty of good soap and water, plenty of rinsing water, fresh drying, and careful ironing. The baby-things last longer, too, when mother washes them—they are handled gently (see p. 10 for the best way to wash napkins).

THE HOUSEHOLD WASH

WAYS AND MEANS

THE household wash is one of the most important events of the week to the housewife. For most people Tuesday is the best day for the weekly washing. Tuesday is better than Monday, because it saves time if the clothes are put in to soak the day before washing. Few

housewives like to do this job on a Sunday. Where there is a large family it is essential to start early in the week, because longer time is needed for drying and ironing; and the earlier this is done the better, because the mind is then free to tackle the other large household tasks, such as turning out rooms. There is an old rhyme which runs:

"They who wash on Wednesday wash in wind and rain;
They who wash on Thursday will soon wash again;
They who wash on Friday surely wash for need;
They who wash on Saturday are lazy ones indeed."

Nevertheless, where tenants of tenements share washhouses and drying grounds, some must wash in the middle or at the end of the week, and they, of course, arrange their housework accordingly.

SORT CAREFULLY

When all the dirty clothes have been collected and turned out of the linen-bags or baskets they must be carefully sorted. Household linen, flannels, and blankets must be separated from cotton, linen, and silk underwear. Hose and handkerchiefs, of course, go in different piles, as do the cleaning cloths, dusters, rubbers, tea-cloths, and oven-cloths. Men's dirty overalls, after soaking, are generally given their first wash in suds already used for washing less soiled garments.

SOAPING AND SOAKING

Soaping very soiled garments and leaving them in to soak the night before washing day is an ex-

cellent plan, because this loosens the dirt. This helps the garments to last longer as well as saving the time of the washer, for hard rubbing, though unavoidable in some cases, in the end helps to wear out the fabrics.

PREPARE BEFOREHAND

Meanwhile the copper has been filled and the fire lighted (only a very inexperienced woman would light the fire before filling the copper). Fuel should be at hand for replenishing. The tubs are then set in order and filled. There should, if possible, be three of these—one for the washing, one for rinsing, and one for blueing. Soap, the blue-bag, washing-board, bowl, washing-brush, copper-stick, and all necessities, should be ready in their proper places near the wash-tub. Nothing tends more to make work go smoothly than a proper beginning; and nothing hinders and irritates so much as to have to leave off one's work to fetch an article that should be at one's elbow.

CLOTHES OF THE SICK

When there is an infectious complaint in the house, sheets, body-linen, handkerchiefs, etc., should be dropped into a pail of soda water and then taken from the sick-room and boiled for fifteen minutes, after which they may be washed with the household linen. It makes more work, but the extra trouble is repaid by preventing further illness. In certain cases, of course, the clothing of persons suffering from an infectious complaint should be sent away to be disinfected.

DON'T NEGLECT TORN GARMENTS

Every article to be washed should be inspected when sorted out. The edges of rents and holes should be drawn together with coarse thread to prevent further tearing until they can be mended. Stains and every soiled part should be noted. (Methods of dealing with stains are given on p. 36.)

Have everything ready.

(*Photograph taken in the Domestic Science Department of Battersea Polytechnic, London, S.W.* 11.)

HOW TO BEGIN WASHING

Wash the less soiled garments first and then proceed to the dirtier ones. (The washing of fine muslins, silks, woollens and coloured garments is dealt with on p. 36.) Soap the soiled

parts of each garment well, and rub lightly with the fingers. If the dirt is not removed in this way, place the dirty part on the washing-board, soap and scrub all over with the brush. Examine after each operation to see that the dirt is gone.

NOW FOR THE COPPER

When each garment in the tub has been well gone over, place all in the copper, in which pieces of soap have been shredded; prod them well down with the copper-stick, replace the lid, and let the water come to the boil. Half-an-hour's boiling should be sufficient. Fine linen, dress shirts, and collars are best placed in a pillow-case, bag, or towel for boiling, and care should be taken that the water is not boiling when they are put in, for it is the *gradual bringing to the boil* that removes the stains and whitens the clothes, after they have already had a preliminary soaking in water.

RINSING IS IMPORTANT

From the copper each garment should go into the rinsing-tub and be well moved about. Rinse until the water runs away clear. If the water is hard, add to the first rinse water a little good household soap dissolved in hot water. Then, after squeezing slightly, the white garment is ready for the blueing water and the wringer.

OUTDOOR AND INDOOR DRYING

The ideal way to dry clothes, of course, is by putting them out of doors on the line. Even in

bad weather it is surprising, if the weather be watched, how much drying can be done on the line. A few minutes' blow helps the indoor drying, and makes the clothes smell sweeter than if wholly dried inside. Be warned, though. See that the line and the clothes-pegs are quite clean. You don't want the result of your labours spoilt! For a large family a drying rack, worked by pulleys fixed to the scullery or kitchen ceiling, is almost indispensable.

Careful folding makes ironing easier.
(*Photograph taken in the Domestic Science Department of Battersea Polytechnic, London, S.W.* 11.)

Hanging out Clothes.—Hang smoothly; do not allow clothes-pegs to drag sheets and tablecloths. Hang thicker parts of garments uppermost, otherwise they take longer to dry. Handkerchiefs may be pinned to the line from the corners in bunches, and may be taken down and folded before they are thoroughly dry.

Tablecloths should be taken down before they are quite dry and folded very evenly, making the corners meet.

When nearly dry, fold each garment carefully. It will then iron more easily. Some things, such as dusters, oven-cloths, sheets, need not be ironed if you are very busy. They should, however, be folded, put through the dry wringer, and then hung up to air. Be very careful that sheets are thoroughly dry before use.

WASHDAY WRINKLES

Dirty Overalls.—When oily and greasy, these are best plunged into the copper, after all the other clothes have been boiled, with extra soap and a little paraffin. Let them boil up for half an hour, and then proceed to wash them like the other garments, with fresh water and soap, of course.

Handkerchiefs before they are washed should be placed for some time in half a bucket of cold water with a handful of common salt thrown in. This hardens any mucus adhering to the fabric and enables it to be brushed or rubbed off easily.

Stains on Tablecloths.—To remove tea or coffee stains, use glycerine. A fresh stain can often be quickly removed by gentle rubbing, but an old stain frequently requires to soak in the glycerine for some time. After the stain is removed, wash the tablecloth in the usual way.

Ink, if fresh, is removable by placing the stained part in running water or in milk. Otherwise salt and lemon-juice should be well rubbed

in, and boiling water poured over as above. If salts of lemon, which is poison, is used for removing ink or ironmould, care must be taken to rinse the part in cold water immediately, otherwise the fabric will be destroyed.

Wine and fruit stains can be removed when fresh by rubbing common salt on them and pouring boiling water over them. There are well-known soap bleaching-powders on the market which liberate oxygen on boiling, removing stains.

Coloured goods which are likely to run should be soaked in cold water and salt before washing. Always wash coloured things separately. Use a lukewarm lather, wash quickly, and rinse in lukewarm water. Dry in a shady place.

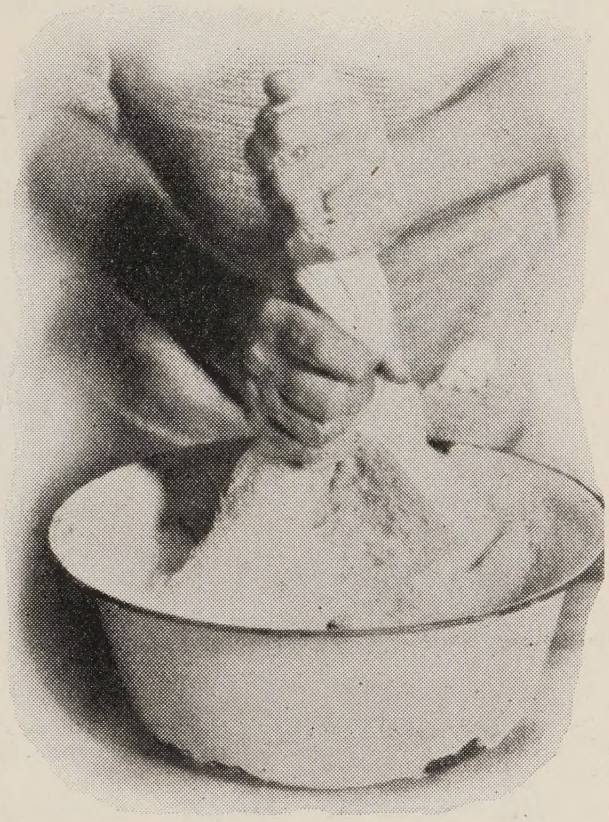
Coloured cottons or muslins should be washed in cold or warm water. Some colours are guaranteed, though, when you buy them, to stand hot water. To set the colours before washing, soak the garments in water to which a little salt has been added, or in water to which a dessertspoonful of ox-gall (1 to the gallon) has been added.

To Make a Good Clear Starch.—Put two tablespoonfuls of starch (more for a large quantity of linen) into a clean basin; break up all lumps; add sufficient cold water to make a paste; work well with the back of the spoon till perfectly smooth, then pour on *boiling* water while stirring, until the starch is clear. Be sure that the water is kept boiling while being poured on, otherwise the starch will not become clear. To ensure clearness the starch can be boiled. A little gum arabic dissolved in boiled starch improves it

Rusty irons may be made smooth by being rubbed while warm with beeswax, and scoured with salt.

SPECIAL WASHING JOBS

Flannels and Flannelettes. — Don't rub soap directly on to them. Make a good soap lather. Don't use very hot water either for washing or rinsing. Rinse well. Dry at once. Dry quickly. Dry away from the fire. Dry in the open if possible. Iron with a cool iron.



Washing woollens—have a good lather.

(*Photograph taken in the Domestic Science Department of Battersea Polytechnic, London, S.W.* 11.)

Woollens.—Follow the rules for flannels, but *don't rub*. Squeeze them in the suds made from a good soap jelly. Don't wring woollens. If folded in a cloth knitted woollens may be passed through a wringer; much moisture will be thereby removed. Press the water out of them. Draw them gently into shape. Pin on a cloth and dry on the flat—in the open if possible.

To Make Soap Jelly.—Shred some pieces of dry soap in a saucepan and cover with water. Stand by the side of the fire and leave to simmer until clear. Stir from time to time. Turn into a jam-jar and leave to cool. Keep covered and free from dust. A little of this jelly put into warm water and beaten with the hand, makes a splendid lather for washing any articles.

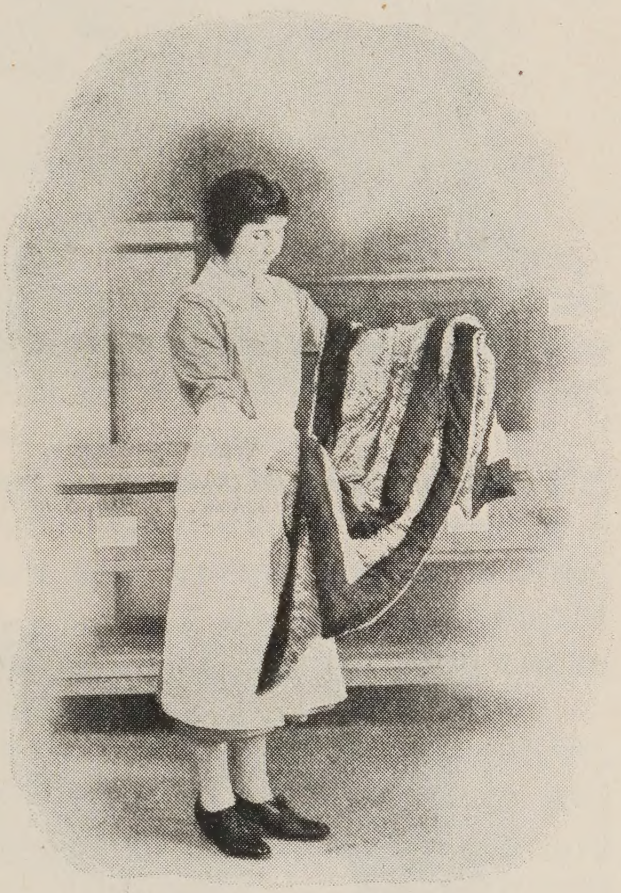
Dry woollens on the flat.
(*Photograph taken in the Domestic Science Department of Battersea Polytechnic, London, S.W.* 11.)

Eiderdowns.—Shake free of dust. Wash as for woollens, using a rich soap lather. If colour is likely to run, use tepid water. Rinse in warm or tepid water, adding a little salt to brighten the colour. Rinse thoroughly—this is very important. If possible put through a wringer. Anyhow, get as much moisture out of it as you can. Dry in a wind, shaking often to make it soft and fluffy as it dries.

Lace, Georgette, Chiffon, Silk, Silk Stockings.—Wash by squeezing out of a soap lather. Do not rub soap on. Rinse very well in tepid water. When nearly dry press with a *cool* iron.

Corsets.—Use a nail-brush and a hot soap lather. Rinse well and dry quickly.

Lace Curtains.—Shake well to get dust out, and wash in a good warm soap lather. Do not rub soap on. Squeeze and knead in the lather. Wash in a second lather if very dirty. Rinse first in warm and then in cold water. Wring carefully and starch while wet. Dry quickly, drawing gently into shape. Do not stretch the corners.



Shake the eiderdown well before washing it.
(*Photograph taken in the Domestic Science Department of Battersea Polytechnic, London, S.W.* 11.)

Chintz and Cretonne.—Shake free of dust and soak for a night in cold water. Wring and wash in a warm soap lather. Rinse thoroughly,

Washing corsets.
(*Photograph taken in the Domestic Science Department of Battersea Polytechnic, London, S.W.* 11.)

Wash gloves in a good soapy lather, but never rub soap on them.
(*Photograph taken in the Domestic Science Department of Battersea Polytechnic, London, S.W.* 11.)

first in warm and then in cold water. Starch when dry.

Washable Gloves.—Make a lather of very pure soap; cool it and wash the gloves on the hands, rinsing in warm *soapy* water. Never rub soap on gloves.

SECTION III—HOUSEHOLD CLEANING

IT would be no use washing clothes and keeping the body scrupulously clean if you didn't clean the house. Scour out the corners—they harbour the dust and germs. Wash floors whenever possible—they can't be too clean.

Walls.—Remove all pictures, etc., from the walls. Tie a clean duster over the head of a long-handled broom and sweep the walls from above downwards. Ceiling and cornices should be treated in the same way. Remove and shake the duster from time to time.

Scrubbing Floors.—Remove all light furniture, mats, and rugs. Sweep the floor. Have a pail of hot water, soap, scrubbing-brush, flannel, and drying-cloths. Wet the brush, soap it, and scrub the floors, moving your brush *with the grain.* Mop up the soap with the damp flannel. Rinse your flannel in fresh water. Mop up again in case any soap and dirt are left. Then dry. Don't use much water. Change it often.

Kitchen Tables.—Scrape off grease and scrub like a floor. If badly stained, put a paste of fuller's earth on the part overnight. Lemon will whiten the wood.

Varnished and Enamelled Woodwork, Paintwork, and Varnished Paper.—Dust first, then use a soft cloth wrung out of soapy water. Rinse with one dipped in cold. Rub in a circle—not up and down. If varnished and dark paintwork is washed and rinsed in water which contains one tablespoonful of paraffin to two quarts of water, smears will be prevented.

Steps should be washed with soap and hot water and rinsed with warm water. If they are kept white, rub with bath-stone and make even with a damp cloth wrung out.

Carpeted Stairs.—Wipe the painted edges once a week with a cloth wrung out first of soapy water and then of clear water. When the carpet is up, give the woodwork underneath a good scrubbing with hot water and disinfectant soap.

Venetian Blinds.—The laths can be taken from their cords, or washed in position. Rub with a cloth wrung out of soapy water, rinse with a damp cloth, and finish off with a dry clean cloth.

Windows and Sashes.—Clean the windows with a cloth wrung out of soapy water. Dry with a cloth that is not fluffy. Polish with paper. Wash the sashes as you would paintwork (see above).

Tiled Hearths and Floors.—Sweep with a soft brush each day. As often as they need it, wash with warm water and soap, using a scrubbing-brush if necessary. Rinse well, and polish with a dry cloth.

Carpets should be brushed each day with a soft brush, and once a week with a hard brush, first sprinkling with tea-leaves which have been well

washed and are only slightly damp, to prevent the dust from rising. To clean, wash over with soap and warm water, then rinse with ammonia and water. Without taking the carpet up, the surface can be washed with any good household or carpet soap. The directions for use should be followed carefully.

Linoleum should only be washed when necessary. Brush daily with a soft brush. A light polish will preserve the pattern and prevent dirt from becoming ingrained. To wash, use plain yellow soap and warm water, drying afterwards with a dry floor-cloth.

Matting.—If slightly soiled, wash with strong solution of salt and water. Rinse both sides and dry thoroughly. A little ammonia and water will remove any stains.

White Skin Rugs.—A small rug can be washed in warm soapy water, with enough ammonia in it to smell strongly. Wash with a kneading motion. Use two washing waters, and rinse in more soapy water. Mangle several times, shake thoroughly, and hang to dry.

Leather Chairs can be cleaned by rubbing lightly with soap and lukewarm water. Wipe thoroughly, then polish with furniture polish. Very little water must be used.

White Wicker Chairs.—Wash with soap and water, using a soft brush. Then rub the chairs with lemon-juice, mixed with an equal quantity of water. Dry in the open if possible. Grease stains can be removed with a little methylated spirits.

Upholstery should be well beaten and brushed. Rub the material thoroughly with warm bran,

which you can get very cheaply from any corn-dealer. A little benzine will remove obstinate stains.

SPECIAL CLEANING HINTS

Lavatory Pans if very stained and foul can be cleaned with muriatic acid, obtained from a chemist, and put on with a rag attached to a

A good housewife never allows a "tide-mark" on the bath.

stick. On no account must the hands touch it. Once clean there is no reason why the pan should become dirty again, if each person is careful to swill it after use. The pan should be kept spotlessly clean. Soapy water can be poured down occasionally, and the pan rubbed with a piece of paper wrapped round a stick.

Bath, Basin, and Bedroom Utensils can be kept clean with soap and water. If a "tide-mark" appears on the bath, a little paraffin added to the water will be effective.

China and Glass can be made to look beautifully bright if washed in soapy water. When washing precious articles, place a cloth in the bottom of the bowl to prevent chipping and scratching.

Silver and Plated Articles can be kept clean and bright if they are washed in hot soapy water. They should be rinsed in hot water, dried quickly, and then rubbed with a leather.

ODD SCRAPS OF SOAP

A good-sized slab of soap is always easiest to use for washing-days, and for washing floors, etc. Don't be afraid to use a new bar of soap. There are lots of odd ways in which you can use up the small pieces.

A SOAP SHAKER

Get a tin box (a cocoa tin does excellently), and with a sharp nail and a hammer knock little holes in the bottom and up the sides. Then fill the tin with scraps of soap. When you wish to obtain a good lather, all you have to do is to swish the tin about in the water for a few seconds. You'll be surprised at the result.

FOR WASHING-UP

Tiny scraps of soap, if dried in a cool oven, can be grated, and make a useful soap-powder for washing-up instead of using soda, which dries up the natural oils of the skin.

A SOAPY HINT OR TWO

TO MAKE DRAWERS SLIDE EASILY

Rub a bar of hard soap over the lower edges of the drawers and on the grooves in which the drawers slide.

WHEN THERE IS AN ESCAPE OF GAS

Apply a mixture of soap and water to the pipe, and bubbles will appear where the leakage is. Plaster the soap well over the leakage, but do not delay sending for the plumber.

COARSE NEEDLEWORK

If you are sewing carpet or felt or any stiff material, soap the surface and also the sewing-cotton. You will find them easier to work with.

HOUSEHOLD REFUSE

Only ashes and tins should be put into the dustbin, and the tins should be washed first to avoid attracting flies. Animal or vegetable refuse should be got rid of as soon as possible, preferably by burning. If there is no coal fire it may be burnt in a fire-bucket in the back yard or buried where there is a garden.

Avoid putting anything wet into the dustbin, as flies breed in damp, warm, vegetable matter and rust is induced.

Dustbins should be kept covered and emptied at least once a week. They should be washed periodically by being filled half full with hot

water and a large piece of soda, then scrubbed with a bass broom, rinsed, dried with a cloth, and left open in the air until perfectly dry.

Clean gullies and yard weekly.

HOUSEHOLD PESTS

THE clean home, because it is a clean home, is generally free from pests, but those that crawl and fly will occasionally gain an entrance, however careful the housewife may be. Here are some hints on how to get rid of some of these pests.

Bugs.—These are the most unpleasant of all pests, and must receive very drastic treatment as soon as their presence is discovered, because they multiply very rapidly. A thorough search must be made in beds, upholstered furniture, etc., which are their favourite burrowing places. Some insect powders are good, and it is advisable to rub iron-work and woodwork with paraffin or turpentine. The help of the Sanitary Authorities can always be obtained if the pests are very troublesome.

Fleas.—Domestic pets are the chief means by which fleas gain entry to a house. See that your dog's coat is frequently brushed and that his kennel is kept scrupulously clean and lime-washed periodically. His bedding should be changed often, too, and pussy's basket should receive the same careful attention.

Flies.—It is well known that flies are carriers of dirt and disease, and they are especially dangerous when there are young children in the

house. Flies breed in dirty corners and in rubbish-heaps; if these are cleared away, refuse bins and back yards are kept scrupulously clean and no food is left lying about, they will not have much chance to breed near your house. A little treacle in a saucer will often catch many of these pests. All food, but especially meat and milk, should be kept covered so that flies cannot alight on them.

Mice.—A cat is generally the best means of getting rid of mice. Do not use any form of poison, as a dead mouse, hidden away, is more troublesome than a live one. A small piece of cheese or bacon in a trap will often catch a mouse.

Cockroaches or Blackbeetles, although not so harmful as flies, are more objectionable on account of their unpleasant appearance and smell. These pests can only be controlled by the most scrupulous cleanliness, especially in places where food is stored. Wooden floors and skirtings which are known to harbour them should be sprinkled with a mixture of equal parts of castor sugar and borax. This should be worked well into any crevices. (Cucumber peel also poisons them.)

Where there's dirt
There's danger
HC
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